

Energy and Air Quality Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

February 27, 2001

7:30 p.m.

Department of Environmental Protection

Members Present:

John Ray, Chair
Morris Altschuler
Bernard Bordenick
Stanley Doore
Mary Fowler
Neal Goldenberg
Susan Mitchell
Edward Ohanian
Frank Stodolsky
Matthew Van Patten
Charles Wilkes

Members Absent:

Robert Brown
Douglas Canter
Jeffrey Komarrow
Milton Minneman

Staff:

Ann Elsen
Mary Richmond

The chair, John Ray, called the February 27, 2001 EAQAC meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Department of Environmental Protection conference room at 255 Rockville Pike.

The January 23, 2001 Meeting Summary was approved with minor revisions.

Transportation - County Fleet:

Sharon Subadan, Chief of the Division of Fleet Management Services gave a presentation on the County's plans for continued use of alternative fueled vehicles (AFVs). She described the County's purchase of compressed natural gas (CNG) powered busses, which expanded the CNG fleet from 5 to 24 busses. These busses currently use a slow-fill refueling system, which limits their use. The present fueling facility takes six hours to refuel a bus, and this time requirement has resulted in the CNG busses not running as many miles as had been originally planned. The Division of Fleet Management Services is currently trying to procure a new refueling facility that would better meet the CNG fleet requirements. Ms. Subadan emphasized the importance of making the CNG fleet work successfully before embarking on extensive programs to utilize other alternative fuels.

Ms. Subadan also discussed issues related to CNG bus performance, and indicated that several early difficulties had been resolved. The committee provided Ms. Subadan with information on the use of low-sulfur fuel with catalyzed particulate traps, and offered to provide additional information as needed. Ms. Subadan will be briefing the Transportation and Environment Committee of the County Council in May of 2001 on the performance of the CNG bus fleet. EAQAC might be able to provide assistance or support at that time.

The chair, John Ray, thanked Ms. Subadan for her willingness to share her time and information with the Energy and Air Quality Advisory Committee. He reaffirmed EAQAC's interest in the County fleet, and suggested that Ms. Subadan draw upon the expertise of EAQAC members as a resource. EAQAC will provide help and support to her efforts as necessary and appropriate.

Energy:

A letter has been sent to the County Executive in support of an initiative of the Department of Permitting Services to establish a mechanical permit, and provide for appropriate design review and inspections.

Mary Fowler has prepared a document for the Energy Subcommittee outlining long-term goals, objectives, and specific activities for 2001. This subcommittee report will be used as a template for other subcommittees to develop a similar approach to planning ongoing projects and activities.

Milt Minneman has scheduled a presentation by Pepco Energy Services for the March 27, 2001 EAQAC meeting.

Transportation - other issues:

Stan Doore presented a recommendation to allow alternative fueled vehicles to use HOV and HOT lanes. His handout included information on emissions and CAFÉ ratings for various vehicles. Mary Richmond provided information on House Bill 934, which addresses this issue at the State level.

The Committee discussed the cost and availability of hybrid electric vehicles.

The chair adjourned the meeting of the full Committee at approximately 10:00 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on March 27, 2001 at the Department of Environmental Protection, 255 Rockville Pike, second floor.

Meeting summary provided by Ann Elsen.